

# 014753 - Ballona Creek Restoration, CA

Contributed by MaLisa Martin  
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## Ballona Updates:

09/11/2006 - Public Meeting Presentation on 07/18/2006 (11.5MB PPT File)

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07/07/2006 - We will be having a public presentation on the progress of the study on July 18th &ndash; coincident with the Ballona Creek Watershed Taskforce bi-monthly meeting at Culver City Hall, at 1:30pm, Dan Patacchia Room. All are welcome.

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02/09/2006 - The study has been moving forward this fiscal year with near completion of a hydrologic model of the watershed. Our hydrologic engineers went on many field trips to investigate natural springs and witness first hand the condition of the watershed. In addition to our modeling efforts we have been working hand-in hand with the Coastal Conservancy to produce one model that will be applicable to both our studies. These negotiations have increased to included the modeling being performed by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, and we are now in the process of setting up a forum for modeling in the watershed to avoid any duplication of effort and get the most synergy out of our efforts.

The next Public Workshop for the Ballona Creek Ecosystem Restoration Study will be held in July. More information will be posted about that as the time approaches.

## Ballona Creek Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study

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### Study Purpose:

Ballona Creek is located in the Los Angeles River Drainage Basin and is the historic course of the River. The watershed (covering an area of 329 sq. kms) has been severely altered by urban development and subsequent channelization of natural creeks and storm drainage infrastructure. The creek is in a trapezoidal channel and currently comes (daylights) above ground in the mid-city district of Los Angeles at Cochran Ave. and Venice Blvd. continuing through Culver City, and ends at the Santa Monica Bay estuary in what was once a large coastal wetland complex. This study will take a comprehensive watershed approach to restore and enhance the creek and remaining wetlands. It will study the feasibility of riparian restoration and soft bottom configuration along the Creek and at the confluences of Centinella and Sepulveda wash. It will also investigate opportunities for water storage in the upper watershed to reduce the impact of storms and sediment coming down the creek. In the lower watershed the study will examine restoration options for scarce coastal wetlands and lagoons, which have since been degraded due to loss of hydrologic connection, reduced tidal prism, encroachment of invasive and non-native species, the placement of fill, and malfunctioning tide gates.

Examples of environmental measures include the following:

- Re-grade and remove fill
- Remove invasive and non-native plant species
- Reintroduce a water source and establish native plants to restore previously filled coastal wetlands

- Evaluate riparian restoration within Ballona Creek Channel
- Improve and/or restore tidal regime in wetlands, the Grand and Venice canals, and Ballona and Del Rey Lagoons
- Investigate potential for in-stream wetland at the Centinela and Sepulveda Tributaries
- Investigate sediment loading in upper watershed
- Improve recreation and educational opportunities
- If suitable, examine fill material for beneficial reuse

#### Background Information:

The initial Lower Ballona Creek Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Los Angeles County, CA 905(b) Reconnaissance Report was completed in September 2005 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the purposes of determining the Federal interest in a cost-shared feasibility study for ecosystem restoration. The results of the 905(b) Reconnaissance Study indicated there is a federal interest in conducting a feasibility study to develop the lower Ballona Creek.

The projected schedule for the feasibility study components is if funding requirements are met  
 Jun 2005 Feasibility Study initiated  
 Sep 2005 1st Public Meeting and Notice of Intent filed for NEPA  
 Jul 2006 Public Workshop to report study progress  
 Jul 2007 Baseline Conditions Report  
 Jan 2008 Alternative Review Report  
 Oct 2008 Draft Feasibility and Draft EIS

#### History:

##### Historical marsh system

The largest salt water and fresh water marsh systems in the Santa Monica Bay area existed in the Lower Ballona Creek historically before development altered their condition. The marshes extended south to the El Segundo Sand Dunes and Westchester Bluffs, north beyond the Ballona Lagoon and Venice Canals and east as far as the confluence of the Ballona and Centinela Creeks. The historic marsh system area included the present Ballona Lagoon, Del Rey Lagoon and the Venice Canal system. The marshes were filled over time for the development of the Venice area and construction of the Marina del Rey small craft harbor.

##### Construction of the Ballona Flood Control channel

The Emergency Flood Control Act of 1935 and the Flood Control Act of 1936 authorized the existing Federal Flood Control Project along Ballona Creek. The main flood control channel was constructed by the Corps and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), between 1935 and 1939. Between 1959 and 1965, in response to the 1941 Flood Control Act, the Corps and the LACFCD modified the existing channel to provide a higher level of protection. Modifications consisted of dredging silt deposits, raising walls and levees, and grouting levee facing.

Ballona Creek is concrete lined upstream beginning just south of La Salle Avenue. Within the study area, below the San Diego Freeway, the channel has an earth invert with quarry stone backfill and grouted stone side slopes. All of its tributaries are either concrete channels or covered culverts. Runoff from the watershed is discharged from the channel into Marina del Rey's South Entrance channel and Santa Monica Bay at the mouth of Ballona Creek, which is located immediately down coast of the Marina harbor.

#### FAQs:

##### Location and Maps:

The greater Ballona Creek drains a watershed of approximately 329 square kilometers (81,300 acres) and is the largest drainage tributary to the Santa Monica Bay. Ballona Creek collects runoff from several partially urbanized canyons on the south slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains as well as from intensely urbanized areas of West Los Angeles, Culver City, Beverly Hills, Hollywood and parts of Central Los Angeles. The urbanized areas account for 80 percent of the watershed area, and the partially developed foothills and mountains make up the remaining 20 percent.

- Yellow areas are part of USACE study

#### Photos:

## Stakeholders/Study Participants:

### Elected Representatives

- Jane Harman, U.S. Representative, 36th Congressional District <http://www.house.gov/harman/>
- Maxine Waters, U.S. Representative, 35th Congressional District <http://www.house.gov/waters/>
- Diane Watson, U.S. Representative, 33rd Congressional District <http://www.house.gov/watson/>
- Diane Feinstein, U.S. Senator <http://feinstein.senate.gov/>
- Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator <http://boxer.senate.gov/>
- Bill Rosendahl, Los Angeles City Councilmember <http://www.lacity.org/council/cd11/>

### Non-Federal Sponsor:

- Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission <http://www.santamonicabay.org/>

### Sub-Sponsors:

- California Coastal Conservancy <http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/>
- City of Los Angeles Public Works Watershed Group <http://www.lacity.org/dpw/dpwhome.htm>
- County of Los Angeles Public Works Watershed <http://ladpw.org/>
- County of Los Angeles Beaches and Harbors <http://beaches.co.la.ca.us/bandh/main.htm>
- Baldwin Hills Conservancy <http://www.bhc.ca.gov/>
- Culver City <http://www.culvercity.org/>
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy <http://smmc.ca.gov/>

### Local Community Interest Groups:

- Ballona Lagoon Marine Preserve  
[http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/directory/resdirectory/b\\_orgs/ballonalagoon.html](http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/directory/resdirectory/b_orgs/ballonalagoon.html)
- Ballona Wetlands Land Trust <http://www.ballona.org/>
- Friends of Ballona <http://www.ballonafriends.org/>
- Ballona Creek Renaissance <http://www.ballonacreek.org/>
- Ballona Creek Watershed Taskforce <http://ladpw.org/wmd/watershed/bc/>
- National Parks & River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program <http://www.nps.gov/>
- Wetlands Action Network <http://www.wetlandsactionnetwork.org/>
- Southern California Coastal Water Research Project <http://sccwrp.org/>

## Technical Documents/Presentations:

Ballona Creek Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. F2 Public Meeting. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. September 29, 2005 (1.82MB PDF)

Lower Ballona Creek Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Los Angeles County, CA 905(b) Reconnaissance Report. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. September 2005 (1.24MB PDF)

## Points of Contact:

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